

5 THE  
IMPORTANCE

*Trade  
in America  
L15*

OF SETTLING and FORTIFYING

NOVA SCOTIA:

WITH

A PARTICULAR ACCOUNT

OF THE

CLIMATE, SOIL, and NATIVE INHA-  
BITANTS of the COUNTRY.

By a GENTLEMAN lately arrived from that  
COLONY.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. SCOTT, in Exchange-  
Alley. 1751.

[ Price One Shilling. ]

IMPORTANCE

NOVEL SCOTLAND

A PARTICULAR ACCOUNT



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THE  
IMPORTANCE  
Of SETTLING and FORTIFYING  
NOVA SCOTIA.



S the settling of *Nova Scotia* has been the subject of a great deal of discourse since the conclusion of the general peace, and considerable sums of money have been granted by parliament for carrying on that settlement, I doubt not but some account of

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that colony would be acceptable to the publick.

And I shall, for method-sake, proceed in my account of it in the following order :

*First*, Give some account of its inhabitants ;

*Secondly*, Of its extent and soil ;

*Thirdly*, Of its growth and progress ;

*Fourthly*, Shew of what great importance it is to preserve it from falling into the hands of the *French*;  
And,



And, *Fifthly*, Shew some of the advantages that will accrue to the *English* from the settling of that colony.

First, then, *its inhabitants*.

It will be needless for me to trace back the several nations that have been masters of that country, but it shall suffice to say, that the *Scots* were once masters of it, from whence it deriv'd its present name of *Nova Scotia*, or *New Scotland*; that in the reign of King *Charles* the second it was ceded to the *French*, who called it *Accadiè*, and remained in the

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hands of the *French* till the year 1710, in the reign of Queen *Anne*, when it was reduced to the *English* by an army from *New England* under the command of General *Nicolson*.

Upon the capitulation of the garrison of *Port Royal*, since call'd *Annapolis Royal*, in honour to Queen *Anne*, the inhabitants obtained leave to continue in the possession of their estates, and enjoyment of their religion, (which is that of the *Roman* catholick) only upon taking an oath of fidelity to the Queen, and paying a small quit-rent, as an acknowledgement to the crown; to be al-

allowed in time of war to stand neuter, neither to be obliged to take up arms for the *English*, nor allow'd to do it for the *French*; and remain there upon those conditions to this day.

So that, notwithstanding we had conquered the whole country, it was still inhabited by the *French*, except the garrison of *Annapolis Royal*, and a small settlement on the island of *Canseau*, for carrying on a fishery.

As the government was wholly military, the *French* inhabitants never brought any of their differences amongst each other to be de-



decided by the *English*, but always submitted them to the decision of the priests, who were their sole temporal as well as spiritual judges.

However, they were obliged annually to choose a deputy in each district to send to *Annapolis* to receive the Governor's commands, as an acknowledgment of their subjection to the *English*.

Thus we were masters of this extensive country for forty years, without ten *English* families, (except those of the garrison) in the whole country, so little was this  
valuable

valuable colony attended to, till in the late war the *French*, by their frequent attempts to reduce it, have shewn us how highly they priz'd it, and of what importance they knew the acquisition of it would be to them. How much then is it our interest to preserve? But of that in its place.

Next, *of its extent and soil.*

The extent of *Nova Scotia* is very great, it stretches along the sea-coast, east and west, for full an hundred leagues, and about forty leagues north and south, so that it contains many millions of acres of ground : it is the north-eastern-

easternmost of all his majesty's colonies on the continent of *America*; it is bounded on the east by *Cape Breton*, on the west by *New England*, and on the north by the great river of *St. Lawrence*.

There is no part of *North America* where they can boast of a more fertile soil, or any land that will produce grain with so little labour, even without the common labour of manuring of land.

The method by which the *French* inhabitants improve their lands is as follows: in the bay of  
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of *Fundy* (where all our *French* inhabitants are settled) there is a very great flow of the tide, perhaps as great as in any part of the world; it rises full six fathoms perpendicular, which overflows a vast deal of their low lands, to prevent which they raise dikes or dams, composed of timber and clay, which effectually keeps out the sea; and upon these low lands it is that they sow their wheat, rice, oats, peas, and flax, graze their cattle, and mow their hay; and these marches extend along the shore, in some places, for seven or eight miles in length, and a mile wide; so that you have at

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one view fields of many hundred acres of grain.

When they find the land wants manure they open some of the dikes, and let in the sea; the natural salt that is in the water, and the sea-weeds that overflows the land, enriches it greatly; so that it is sufficiently manur'd by opening the dikes once in three or four years, and that only for a few tides.

As these lands are very fertile, the inhabitants raised much more grain than they could consume; so that they have exported very  
con-

considerable quantities to the other colonies, sometimes ten thousand bushels in a year, and many thousand yards of linnen-cloth, made from their flax, and some hundred head of cattle annually ; which shews what the country is capable of producing, had it been in any other hands but those of the indolent *French*, who don't work scarce above half the year, on account of their superstitious holidays.

As they find it so much to their advantage to improve these low lands, they have not cleared a great deal of the up-land, only



just enough for their orchards and gardens for raising their roots, which exceed any in *America* both for largeness and taste ; and they have some flourishing orchards, and begin to make syder, and sugar they make from the maple-juice.

In many parts of the country there are very good masts for shipping, and oak for the building of ships. In the bay of *Fundy* there are variety of coals, sufficient to supply all *America* with fuel ; and there is very good reason to believe there are some valuable mines in the country, as there has been some copper ore found

found already ; but whether there are mines in the land or not, we are sure of finding mines in the sea, which as the banks are situated so very near for the cod-fishery, it is an inexhaustible source of treasure.

Next, *Of its growth and progress.*

In the year 1710, when *Nova Scotia* was reduced to the *English*, the number of its inhabitants was but very inconsiderable, the whole not exceeding three thousand souls, and its improvements but small ; since which they

they have encreased to fourteen thousand, in about forty years, without the addition of any people from other parts of the world; which is a proof that the climate is very healthy.

As I observed before, these were the only inhabitants we had in the colony till the arrival of Governor *Cornwallis*, in *June*, 1749, with a fleet from *England*, with about fifteen hundred inhabitants, to settle *Chebueto*, (since call'd *Halifax*) which is one of the finest harbours in *America*. The whole navy of *England* may ride in it with safety: it is remarkable, that



that in their passage from *England* they never buried one person out of fifteen hundred, but carried in more than they brought out with them, as there was several births on the passage. The year following there came over from *England*, *Germany*, and our colonies, about three thousand more, which make about eighteen thousand inhabitants in the colonies, including the *French*, and are daily encreasing, besides the troops, which consist of about two thousand men.

The improvements that have been made in the colonies within these

these last two years are surprizing to every one that has seen it, which is entirely owing to the wisdom and prudence of the governor, who is endowed with every qualification requisite for a person in his important post: but his zeal and indefatigable pains, in promoting every thing that might conduce to the good of that colony, is too conspicuous to the world to need my imperfect encomiums.

The town of *Halifax* is enclosed in with palisadoes of ten feet high, and has five bastions where there are cannon mounted, which not only flanks the palisadoes,

does, but commands a large tract of ground round the town. Within the town there are about six hundred houses, and an handsome church; and without the gates they have about five hundred houses, and an hospital and orphan-house.

*Halifax* is one of the most regular built towns on that continent; it is situated upon a fine easy ascent from the harbour; the rise is so very gradual, that from every house in the town they may have a fine prospect of the harbour. The houses are laid out in

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squares, and the streets are sixty feet wide.

On the east side of the harbour, opposite to *Halifax*, is the town of *Dartmouth*, which contains about one hundred and fifty houses, and a small fort, for their defence against the natives. The greatest part of the fish is made upon the island, near the mouth of the harbour, and upon *Point Pleasant*, about three miles to the southward of *Halifax*, where the air proves very good for the drying the fish.

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The last year there was about forty sail of vessels, from twenty to seventy tons, employed in the cod-fishery, which caught about twenty-five thousand quintals of fish; and they have a prospect of making much more this season, as they have many more vessels employed in the fishery. At the head of *Chebueto Bay*, about ten miles above *Halifax*, is *Fort Seville*, where there is a saw-mill erected upon a fresh-water river, at *Piziquid*; about thirty miles farther in the country is *Fort Edward*, and at *Minis*, fifteen miles farther, is another fort.

The two last are placed just in the center of our *French* settlements, which effectually keeps the inhabitants in awe. At the head of the bay of *Fundy*, between that and the bay of *Vert*, upon a narrow isthmus, of but a few miles across, is the garrison of *Checoneeto*, where they have about eight hundred men in garrison. As this isthmus is very narrow, which the *Indians* must pass to come at any of our settlements, (which are all upon the peninsula) this fort deters them greatly from coming down upon our settlements, for  
fear



fear of being intercepted in their retreat ; so that there has been scarce an instance of any *Indians* being seen on the peninsula since that fort has been erected upon the isthmus.

All these forts have been built within these last two years, besides a considerable one upon an island near the mouth of the harbour of *Halifax* ; and, if they are sufficiently supported from *England*, they will be able, in a short time, not only to defend themselves against a land-force, but even an enemy by sea, the importance

portance of which I shall next proceed to shew.

The *French* have upon all occasions, during the late war, demonstrated the great desire they had of being again masters of *Nova Scotia*, by their frequent attempts to reduce it.

Upon the first declaration of the war they took *Canseau*, and burnt it, and then came immediately and laid siege to *Annapolis Royal*; and had it not been timely reinforced from *New England*, would certainly have taken it, as the garrison at that time  
was

was very weak, and the work very much out of repair.

In the year 1745 they made another attempt, with an army from *Canada*; but upon their hearing that *Cape Breton* was besieged, they immediately march'd off towards their assistance.

The year following, the strongest fleet the *French* have had in *America* for many years, under the Duke *D'Anville*, arriv'd at *Chebuëto*, and it seems their orders were first to reduce *Nova Scotia*, before they attempted either *Louisbourg* or *Boston*,  
as



as well knowing it to be the most valuable acquisition, and that it would greatly facilitate the reduction of the others. But their meeting with such contrary winds upon their passage from *France*, being upwards of an hundred days before they arrived, rendered their men so very sickly, that they were not in a condition to undertake any thing ; and after burying about fifteen hundred of their men, amongst which number was the two commanding officers, they return'd home without effecting any thing at all.

Was

Was the *French* to make themselves Masters of *Nova Scotia*, it would be not only the ruin of *New England*, but of almost all our colonies on the continent; our present neutral inhabitants, who have always shewn their desire of being united to the *French*, by always succouring the enemy in their several attempts against us. These, I say, we must expect would immediately declare for the *French*, which would strengthen them greatly, by adding near four thousand hardy robust men to their number.

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The situation of *Canada* is such, that it runs along upon the back of our settlements, for several hundred miles upon the continent, where the *French* are known to be numerous, and have always the *Indians* at their command; and had they *Nova Scotia*, which without doubt they, according to their known maxim, would fortify, and make so strong, that it would not be easy to dispossess them; and our colonies, in time of war, would be continually as it were between two fires, viz. *Nova Scotia* on the east, and *Canada* on the west,  
that

that it would be impossible to carry on our new settlements on the continent, and all the inhabitants must remove into the center of the country, or retire into garrisons, to the utter ruin of many thousand families; and as *Nova Scotia* is situated so near the fishing banks, they would be able to ruin all our fishery in that part of the world, which is a very great and advantageous branch of trade to the *English*. It lies so very near the course of all our shipping going from and coming to *Europe*, they would be able in a great measure to ruin that trade by their priva-



teers: here they would have a commodious place of rendezvous to make up their fleet, and refresh their men, within sixty leagues of *New England*, that we should be in continual fear of invasions. In short, it may very justly be said of *Nova Scotia*, what the *French* said of it when they had taken part of it in the late war, (*viz. Canseau*) that it is the key of all *North America*.

These are some of the consequences we might reasonably expect, was *Nova Scotia* to fall into the hands of the *French*; which I believe every one that knows its situation

situation will agree with me in. How much then is it our interest to preserve it, since the preservation of all our colonies depends so much upon the security of that one, which is a barrier to all the others ; so that if there was no other view in the settlement than the safety of our other colonies, it would be a very sufficient motive for the settling and fortifying of *Nova Scotia*. But that is not the only advantage we may expect from that settlement ; for there is no colony on that continent promising greater advantages to its mother-country ; which I shall next proceed to shew.

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It must be allow'd that our colonies in general are a very great advantage to *Great Britain*, by promoting its trade and navigation, as they are not only a receptacle for our superfluous people from *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, but for many thousands of foreigners, who annually go over from *Germany*, and other parts of *Europe*, which makes a great addition to the strength and trade of the nation.

Besides the advantage of bringing a great number of foreigners to settle there, *Nova Scotia* will be a  
great



great nursery for seamen, a thing so necessary in this nation. The act that has lately passed in that colony for the encouragement of the cod-fishery, whereby a bounty of six-pence upon every quintal of fish cur'd there, and ten shillings a ton for every vessel built in the colony, (is to be paid out of a fund raised by a tax laid upon the spirituous liquors drank there) has been a means of augmenting their fishery to near double of what it was the last year. Two great advantages will accrue from this act; the one of encouraging great numbers of people to engage in the fishery, which will enable

enable us to undersell our rivals, the *French*, at the foreign markets, in that commodity; the other is of employing a great number of our seamen, who have been oblig'd to go into the service of other nations, for want of employment in their own.

There is no branch of business that is carried to greater advantage to *Great Britain* than the cod-fishery in *Nova Scotia*; as it will employ a great number of vessels, it will add very much to the consumption of the manufacture of this kingdom, such as cordage, sail-cloth, lines, leads, hoops,

hoops, nets, &c. and as it is a cold climate, they will consume great quantities of our woollen manufacture.

In time of peace with the *Indians* there may be a very advantageous trade carried on with them for furs; and as the country abounds with timber, they may build great numbers of good ships; a specimen of which has been already tried, of one of an hundred and thirty tons.

But besides the advantage of trade, we shall, by settling *Nova Scotia*, have all the advantages

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over the *French* colonies that they would have over ours was it in their hands, as we shall be within sixty leagues of *Cape Breton*; by keeping a few ships of war stationed at *Halifax*, we shall be able to distress their trade greatly, and ruin their fishery. Here we shall have a safe harbour to make up our fleets, and refresh our men, within two days sail of the *French*, should we form any designs of attacking any of their settlements in that part of the world.

In short, by settling and fortifying *Nova Scotia*, and keeping a squadron there, we may easily  
make

make ourselves masters of all *North America*, and engross all the cod-fishery and fur-trade to ourselves, as we have found by experience, in the late war, that *Cape-Breton* is not impregnable.

A great deal more might be said of the importance of *Nova Scotia*, but I believe the foregoing account (though imperfect) will be sufficient to give those that were not acquainted with that country some idea of it; and as I have been several years in the country, I am well knowing in every thing I have said concerning it.

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